STALKE
GALLERI
STALKE OUT OF SPACE

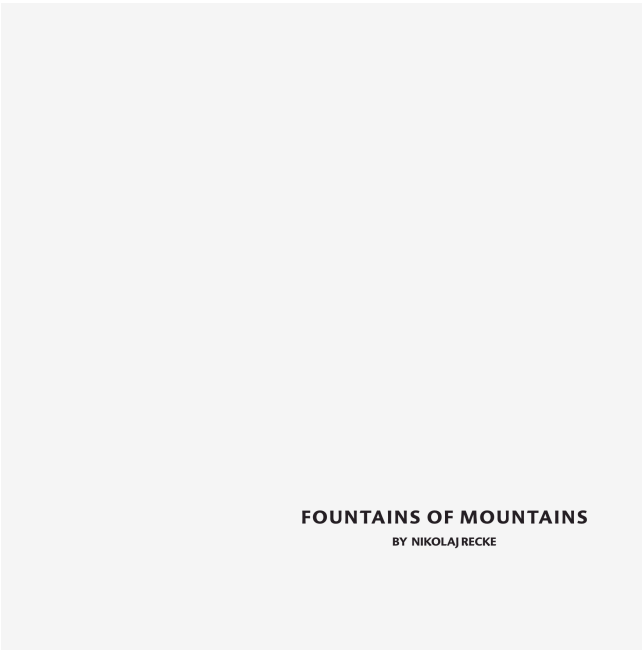
Catalogue

Fountains of Mountains

Nikolaj Recke

The catalogue presents a broad selection of works spanning the early phases of Recke's practice and into later developments. The publication includes a text by Jacob Lillemose, situating Recke's work within a conceptual framework shaped by questions of authorship, staging, and artistic identity.

Recke's practice operates across photography, installation, performance, and text, often using the artist's own presence as a reflective and constructed figure. Through repetition, exaggeration, and self-reference, the works explore the tension between sincerity and role-playing, intimacy and distance. Rather than offering stable narratives, *Fountains of Mountains* traces a shifting artistic position in which personal mythology and art-historical reference are closely intertwined.



Fountains of Mountains
by Nikolaj Recke

Published by Stalke Edition, Sam Jedig and Art Agent

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Selected pages from the catalogue *Fountains of Mountains*, published by Stalke Edition, Sam Jedig, and Art Agent. The pages present works from across Nikolaj Recke's practice alongside excerpts from Jacob Lillemose's text, reflecting on the development and conceptual structure of the artist's work.

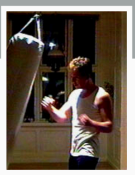
FOUNTAINS OF MOUNTAINS

BY NIKOLAJ RECKE

paradoxical it may seem – avoiding being an artist – and in a metaphorical sense, avoiding making art – is in principle a real possibility for a contemporary artist. An escape of some kind from the traditional framework is, in any case, a necessity for continuing the discussion and development of contemporary art, both in general and for the individual.

The Invisible Man also made subtle reference to Yves Klein's 1958 exhibition The Void, where he emptied the Iris Clert Gallery and painted it completely white. Recke's notion of the empty gallery space is nevertheless quite different from that of Klein. It is, in one sense, more literal, and it signifies that his point of departure is a concrete and personal practice informed by pre-existing concepts and the history of art, rather than by transcendental and avant-garde ideas.

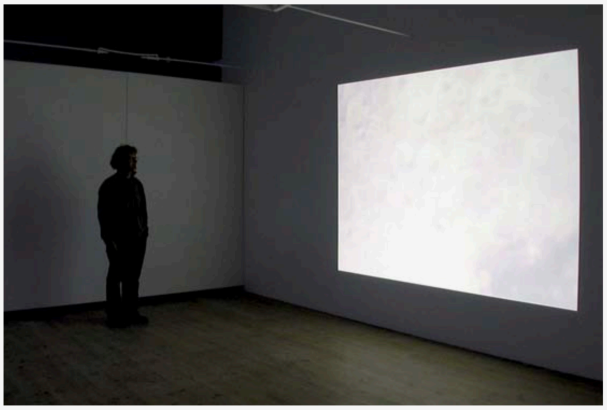
Two other early works by Recke are worth mentioning in this regard: Skater-Klein (1996), where Recke painted his nose red



with lipstick and skated face first directly into a wall to mimic another of Klein's famous works, the Anthropometries series. And Giving Back (1996), for which Recke made a boxing bag out of white canvas filled with cotton, hung it in his living room and started punching it – the sand bag, in this context, obviously being a banal stand-in for the monochrome, the crux of the disembodied aesthetics of modernism. Again, with both self-irony and honesty, these two works illustrate that escaping

from, or just coming to terms with, the traditional art framework is hard and difficult work. You either repeatedly skate into a wall or get exhausted from punching an 'opponent' that remains almost unaffected. So Recke, as a contemporary artist, presents himself as a somewhat tragic-comical character – a street-wise clown with a bloody nose – but also as an unimpressed fighter who does not accept retreat as an answer to the challenge. Instead, his response takes the form of a counter-challenge within a contexts defined by himself. Recke uses his own inane everyday activities – interactions with his physical and non-institutionalized surroundings

LUNATIC



PACING IN CIRCLES